

LA /ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION SOUTH AREA

THURSDAY 15 JUNE 2023

MEETING SUMMARY: ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Agendas and minutes for these meetings available at www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk

Attendance List	
<p>DISTRICT AND EPHA AGENDA (a.m.) (Notes below) Nicky Stone-Riley, Chair</p> <p>Power Project Update NAHT update SEPHA meeting and AGM Election of Officers and Local Delivery Group representatives EPHA updates</p> <p>Headteacher wellbeing</p>	<p>Welcome to the following Headteachers: Penny Coe Robert Drake Primary (Co-head) Natalie Jackson Robert Drake Primary (Co-head) Lorna Pigram Downham CE Primary Sean Tobin Downham CE Primary Robert Wade Whitmore Primary and Nursery (Head of School)</p> <p>Farewell to the following headteachers: Lynne Kapovic Rayleigh Primary Travis Martinson William Read Primary Lou Nelson Downhall Primary Bernadette Rossiter St Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary Karen Tucker Canvey Juniors Jethro Bogdanov Matt O'Grady Nicky Stone-Riley</p> <p>Chair Nicky Stone-Riley (Cherry Tree Primary) Vice-Chair Richard Green (Grove Wood Primary) Treasurer Luke Bulpett (Brightside Primary) Wickford Heidi Blakeley (Abacus Primary) Billericay Liz Benjeddi (South Green Juniors) Rochford Hayley O'Dea (Great Wakering Primary) Rayleigh Gary Soars (Edward Francis Primary) Brentwood Matt O'Grady (West Horndon Primary) Canvey Island Sandra Dorrington (Canvey Infants) Castle Point/Benfleet Diana Mason (Montgomerie Primary) Basildon East/Pitsea Nicky Stone-Riley (Cherry Tree Primary) Basildon West Julie Braithwaite (Lincewood Primary) Round table discussion to gather ideas that support wellbeing</p>
<p>p 1 AREA AGENDA LA updates on current priorities including:</p> <p>p 2 • Director's welcome and update Clare Kershaw</p> <p>p 2-6 • National Policy updates</p> <p>p 6 • School Communications update</p> <p>p 6 -8 • School improvement traded offer Lisa Fergus/Maz Norman</p> <p>p 8 -10 • SEMH support offer Steve Whitfield</p> <p>p 10 • LA Strategic Priorities Clare Kershaw</p>	<p>p12 -14 Essex Year of Numbers Gareth Honeyford and Nathalie Banthorpe</p>
<p>p 15 Key dates</p>	<p>SOUTH headteacher meetings 2023/24 Thursday 16 November 2023 Thursday 29 February 2024 Thursday 13 June 2024 Deputy Headteachers' Annual Conference 2023 Friday 13 October 2023 Colchester Football Stadium Headteachers' Annual Conference 2024 Friday 22 March 2024 Chelmsford City Race Course</p>
<p>*Page numbers refer to the full minutes (posted on the EPHA website) of the Summer term Area meetings with LA Officers and Headteachers.</p>	

LA /ESSEX PRIMARY HEADS' ASSOCIATION SOUTH AREA
DISTRICT AND AREA MEETING
THURSDAY 15 JUNE 2023
ATTENDANCE

Basildon/Billericay/Wickford

Gareth Allen	Millhouse Primary
Phil Andrews	Rettendon Primary
Rachel Anthony	Runwell Primary
Liz Benjeddi	South Green Juniors
Julie Braithwaite	Lincewood Primary
Annie Bristow	Wickford CE Infants
Luke Bulpett	Brightside Primary
Lynn Cooney	Oakfield Primary
Sandra Dorrington	Canvey Island Infants
Donna Dry	Bardfield Primary
Lisa Patient	Noak Bridge Primary
Penny Pepper	Eversley Primary
Harriet Phelps-Knights	Janet Duke Primary
Nicky Stone-Riley	Cherry Tree Primary
Rachelle Tidiman	Ghyllgrove Primary
Sharon Walker	North Crescent Primary

In Attendance

Pam Langmead	EPHA Professional Officer
Koulla Anslow	Lakelands Primary
Simon Harbrow	SEAT
Jenny Haken	Millhouse Primary
Jennifer Milner	Wyburns Primary

LA Officers

Clare Kershaw	Director of Education
Lisa Fergus	Assistant Director, South
Jo Barclay	Education Safeguarding
Maz Norman	Head of EY and Education, South
Hilary Luckman	School Effectiveness Partner
Bethan Russell	School Effectiveness Partner
Mel Clapton	School Effectiveness Partner
Jethro Bogdanov	Power
Gareth Honeyford	Education Taskforce

Rochford/Rayleigh/Castle Point/Canvey Island

Jen Burdett	Great Wakering Primary
Dominic Carver	South Benfleet Primary
Emma Dawson	Thundersley Primary
Lucy Fynn	Hadleigh Infants
Richard Green	Grove Wood Primary
Robin Goodier	Holt Farm Infants
Lynne Kapovic	Rayleigh Primary
Kath Sansom	Wyburns Primary
Claire Smith	Riverside Primary
Gary Soars	Edward Francis Primary
Catherine Stalham	Winter Gardens Primary
Karen Tucker	Canvey Juniors
Sarah Warnes	Jotmans Hall Primary

Brentwood

Steve Bowsher	Larchwood Primary
Liam Daley	St Helen's Catholic Juniors
Andrea Farrant	Blackmore Primary
Dean Moran	St Thomas of Canterbury CE Jun
Matt O'Grady	West Horndon Primary
Louise Putt	Bentley St Paul's CE Primary
James Rogers	Ingrave Johnstone CE Primary
Neil Taggart	Ingatestone & Fryerning Juniors
Sally Taggart	St Mary's CE Primary, Shenfield
Robert Watson	Hogarth Primary

Apologies

Aaron Cross	Kingston Primary
Stephanie Crump	Leigh Beck Juniors
Jo Parkes	Kents Hill Juniors
Aaron Wright	Leigh Beck Juniors

Note: If your attendance or apologies have not been noted please contact the EPHA Professional Officer at pam@langmead.me.uk for amendment.

SOUTH EPHA AREA MEETING MINUTES 15 JUNE 2023

1. WELCOME

Nicky Stone-Riley, the South Area Chair welcomed headteachers to the meeting.

Welcome to the following Headteachers:

Penny Coe	Robert Drake Primary (Co-head)
Natalie Jackson	Robert Drake Primary (Co-head)
Lorna Pigram	Downham CE Primary
Sean Tobin	Downham CE Primary
Robert Wade	Whitmore Primary and Nursery (Head of School)

Farewell to the following headteachers:

Lynne Kapovic	Rayleigh Primary
Travis Martinson	William Read Primary
Lou Nelson	Downhall Primary
Bernadette Rossiter	St Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary
Karen Tucker	Canvey Juniors

If you are leaving please make use of the EPHA new heads' checklist, and complete it for your successor. This is available on the EPHA website at

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/info-and-documents/good-practice/>

2. POWER PROJECT UPDATE

Jethro Bogdanov was welcomed to the meeting. He explained that Power is a targeted early intervention and prevention service across Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) funded by NHS England Mental Health & Justice Pathways via CAMHS collaborative. It is now the prevention offer within Essex Youth Offending Service.

The project is voluntary, offering free 12 x 1 to 1 support to children and young people aged 8-13, and their parents, to help them develop the emotional resilience to cope with challenging situations.

The following criteria apply when accessing Power:

- Youth Justice: will have had contact with or be known to the police (perhaps as a victim, or an 'involved person') but not convicted of an offence
- School: struggling to engage at school, attending irregularly, at risk of exclusion, on reduced timetables, may have unmet SEND / additional needs
- Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health: indicators of need include emotional dysregulation, various trauma responses such as fight, flight, freeze.

The main aim of Power is to support children and young people to develop their emotional resilience
The key objectives are:

- To help reduce school exclusions (both fixed term and permanent)
- To support children transitioning from primary to secondary education where possible
- To work with families, schools and other agencies to help scaffold effective on-going support post-intervention
- To prevent the criminalisation of children and young people

POWER is a sub-statutory threshold service (level 2 in Essex County) but many families have significant experience of social care, and co-work cases with ECC Early Help (Family Solutions, Level 3 in Essex County) and TAFSO service

Support siblings of those under YOS' supervision, inc. Out of Court Disposals (Community Resolution+)
Part of the wider CAMHS pathway for youth justice:
Affinity (MH&J pathways) within ECFWS (HCRG+ Barnardo's 0-19 service)
To support the wider local authority to deliver Trauma Perceptive Practice training to schools

POWER Manager jethro.bogdanov@essex.gov.uk
Practice Supervisor chloe.potter@essex.gov.uk

3. NAHT UPDATE

Matt O'Grady gave an update about the NAHT conference and the current ballot of members in relation to potential industrial action. He noted that he attended the NAHT conference in May, which was well attended by members. The issues that are affecting Essex headteachers are replicated nationally, and the NAHT was disappointed with the outcome of the first ballot, when insufficient members voted to support a strike or action short of a strike.

Dr Julia White spoke movingly about the tragic death by suicide of her sister, headteacher Ruth Perry. Ruth was one of 12 heads and teachers whose inquests have mentioned the pressure of Ofsted inspection being a contributory factor to their death, so this was not a one-off tragic case.

The NAHT has four focus areas of concern:

- Pay and funding
- Workload and wellbeing
- Recruitment and retention
- Ofsted

As Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for education, has referenced these, they can be included in the negotiation discussions between the Union and Government. However, in common with other pay negotiations, the Government is taking a hard-line stance, at least for the time being. Matt encouraged headteachers to vote for industrial action, whether or not they themselves planned to join in a strike. *(NB NAHT branch officers, Alan Garnett (North East) and Dida Burrell (Mid) spoke at their area meetings giving similar messages.)*

4. SOUTH EPHA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

a) CHAIR'S REPORT

Nicky Stone-Riley, Chair of South EPHA, gave the following report.

Last year in our Chairs' reports the phrase 'lost for words' came up a lot and I also commented on the fact that there had been many experiences which were 'firsts'; some of which left me quite literally speechless. This year has been no different!

I suspect we have all been working longer and harder and trying to do our best for the children and communities we serve. We are working with ever tightening budgets, being asked to do more with less and trying to retain or recruit staff into a system that is very clearly broken. The uptake of staff into senior leadership roles is dwindling and more staff are spending more and more time talking about early exit, escape plans or reviewing what their skills set could be used for in other employment. I don't blame anyone for thinking that at all.

A highlight of the year must be the return of the 'critical worker list' to remind us that even though a strike is taking place, we must be made to feel guilty about how this impacts the rest of society.

Our new Secretary of State for Education has done little to support schools and short of placing a massive injection of money into SEMH provision, I just don't think there is an answer.

Many of us have had to cut hours or carry out redundancies or trim budgets to ensure our survival for another year but what about the year after that? There are a number of variations of the Einstein's insanity quote but in essence, if we change nothing, nothing will change and we'll keep getting the same outcome. The system needs to change, we need a new approach to education and we need the buildings and resources to deliver it. An education that is looking to the future and is able to respond quickly and efficiently to the changes that come its way.

In Nick's report he has urged us to hold on to the 'bright spots' of our weeks; the raison d'être for us being headteachers. The child that 'finally gets it', the dysregulating child that has learnt to re-regulate by themselves without the support of a member of staff, the non-attending child who has returned to school, the staff who have followed an instruction without the need for follow up, the smiles and tears that we have shed as a team and the sense of making a difference, however small.

EPHA has been here throughout for you all. We continue to sit at the table with the LA and other professional associations fighting for Primary Education. We stand firm in knowing that our children deserve a great education from our schools and that we do the very best we can with the little we have.

EPHA continues to provide Heads with a support network, a place to voice concerns and to offer the support you deserve and ensuring that you are kept up to date with the critical information that you need, to try to make sense of where we are now and the expectations upon us. My thanks to members of the South Executive and please remember we are looking to fill two vacancies (Basildon West and Canvey Island).

I would like to thank Pam on behalf of us all. Without her EPHA would not run so efficiently and cohesively. Her support and hard work for the heads of Essex is unstinting. Her recall of documents and meetings is second to none. The termly briefings are both a joy and a terror! Her ability to make us all laugh and provide comfort when needed are second to none. The conferences each year are days to remember and a time for professional development and fun. So please join me in a massive round of applause for our friend and colleague.

What is to come?

Without question more financial hardship, more difficult choices. For some of us increasing pressure to be another 'emergency service' for our families. Perhaps we will see more industrial action, more significant changes to Ofsted. All we can be is prepared for anything, isn't that what being a head is largely about?

Throughout my career I have reflected on why I do my job. As I said last year, quite simply, the children. To make a difference to them and for them. Similarly, it is why I am proud to represent you, my colleagues, as Chair of SEPHA. You are brilliant at your jobs. You are creative and fierce and compassionate and dedicated. I applaud every single one of you for being you, for still running your schools, for making a difference to the lives of your communities and staff. Thank you.

b) ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND LOCAL DELIVERY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Chair	Nicky Stone-Riley (Cherry Tree Primary)
Vice-Chair	Richard Green (Grove Wood Primary)
Treasurer	Luke Bulpett (Brightside Primary)
Wickford	Heidi Blakeley (Abacus Primary)
Billericay	Liz Benjeddi (South Green Juniors)

Rochford	Hayley O'Dea (Great Wakering Primary)
Rayleigh	Gary Soars (Edward Francis Primary)
Brentwood	Matt O'Grady (West Horndon Primary)
Canvey Island	Sandra Dorrington (Canvey Infants)
Castle Point/Benfleet	Diana Mason (Montgomerie Primary)
Basildon East/Pitsea	Nicky Stone-Riley (Cherry Tree Primary)
Basildon West	Julie Braithwaite (Lincewood Primary)

The officers and Local Delivery Group representatives were thanked for the hard work that they do on behalf of headteachers in the South Area and for agreeing to continue in their roles or taking on new positions.

5. EPHA UPDATES

- a) **The Summer term EPHA newsletter**, including dates for the 2023/24 school year, was circulated to headteachers in advance of the meeting -these can also be found on the EPHA website www.essexprimaryheads.co.uk.

b) **EPHA Annual Subscription**

Funding for EPHA will be continue to be top-sliced from the Delegated Schools Grant. Area meetings will continue to be "free" to all primary headteachers, as will the website, headteacher briefings and advice and support from the Professional Officer.

<https://essexprimaryheads.co.uk/files/what-headteachers-get-in-return-for-their-epha-contribution-2022-23.pdf>

c) **EPHA County Annual General Meeting**

The EPHA county AGM will be held on Thursday 5th October at the Lion Inn, Boreham.

d) **Conferences**

Headteachers were reminded that the Deputy Headteachers' conference will be held on Friday 13 October 2023, at the Colchester Football Stadium (key note speakers Andrew Moffat and Bobby Seagull) and next year's annual Headteachers' conference will be held on Friday 22 March 2024 at Chelmsford City Race Course.

The programme and booking form for the Deputy Conference will be emailed to schools at the end of June.

There will be a conference for the Small Schools Support group on Wednesday 18th October 2023 at the Lion Inn, Boreham.

e) **Governor and staff online training**

We're pleased to report that around 250 governors, trustees and staff have attended recent online training focused on exclusions meeting a real need in the county.

The Professional Officer will be running another session on the latest suspensions and exclusions guidance, with a particular emphasis on the governor's role in the process.

The date/time of the **exclusions training** is Tuesday 11th July 2023, at 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm.

She will also run a training course on **managing complaints**, again focused on the role of governors. Two dates are available (course repeated, pick one):

- Tuesday 27th June 2023, at 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm; OR
- Wednesday 5th July 2023, at 4.00 pm – 6.00 pm.

Please ask any interested governors to contact Pam Langmead, at pam@langmead.me.uk indicating which training session they want to attend –she will send them a confirmation email with the Zoom link, and slides in advance of the session.

6. HEADTEACHER WELLBEING – ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

At each area meeting headteachers were asked to identify what activities actually help to support headteacher wellbeing – has the partnership, or have you as an individual, found something that really works? The following suggestions were collated, and will be included within the EPHA Support Directory:

Formal coaching, counselling, supervision

- ✓ DSL supervision
- ✓ Hearth Health programme- Maria Brosnan
- ✓ Professional supervision (this was mentioned a lot)
- ✓ Life coach
- ✓ “Positive” Neil – 2 sessions <https://positiveneil.com/>
- ✓ Counselling sessions from Southend Extended Services – headteacher supervision available
- ✓ Headteacher counselling 1:1
- ✓ “Inside Out” – Maggie Farrar – leadership resilience programme
- ✓ Headspace

Dedicated Leadership Time and work-life balance

- ✓ Non-contact time for headteacher- weekly/fortnightly/half termly
- ✓ Work from home on a scheduled basis
- ✓ One late start “in school” a week – start work at home at 7.00 am/get to school at 10.00 am
- ✓ No evening meetings!
- ✓ Keeping some meetings online, including governors and parents
- ✓ Get the worst things off your list!
- ✓ A target for performance management
- ✓ Not having email on your phone
- ✓ No emails before 8 am, after 6 pm or weekends – making sure you are disciplined about this
- ✓ One day a weekend with no work
- ✓ No parent direct access – emails go through admin
- ✓ Shorter Friday afternoons
- ✓ 2 week October half term
- ✓ Delegate well, but take an interest in everyone
- ✓ Spending time with the children

Networking, partnerships and colleague support

- ✓ Being with other heads and spending time informally, chatting about commonalities – know you all share the same “issues”
- ✓ “Bitch and a Bun” sessions
- ✓ WhatsApp group to share problems
- ✓ Half termly partnership meetings and share experiences – often over lunch.
- ✓ Attending conferences as a partnership group.
- ✓ Very informal meetings- no agenda meetings
- ✓ Partnership meetings
- ✓ Headteacher conferences – including Partnership conferences, EPHA, national
- ✓ Fortnightly Zoom meetings
- ✓ Off-site meetings e.g. EPHA – sharing and meeting
- ✓ Formal and informal networks of headteachers
- ✓ Residential – 2 nights planning for group
- ✓ Pub lunch before partnership meetings
- ✓ Twitter (find like-minded colleagues)

- ✓ Attending conferences e.g. Inspiring Leadership, NGFL, EPHA
- ✓ Setting boundaries – shut the door if you need to
- ✓ Consortium wellbeing event
- ✓ Allocated mentor within the Partnership
- ✓ Shared humour

Physical activities

- ✓ Wellbeing Walks – for some, followed by breakfast.
- ✓ 10 minutes' walk during the day – know your signs and regulate
- ✓ Staff wellness package
- ✓ Deep Breaths – we hire a pod at Gridserve
- ✓ Star wellbeing days <https://starwellbeing.co.uk/>
- ✓ Meditation and Reiki – breathwork
- ✓ Meditation and prayer
- ✓ Singing in a choir/playing in an orchestra
- ✓ Activities that mean you have to focus and NOT think about school
- ✓ Dog walking
- ✓ Gym
- ✓ Cycling
- ✓ Run twice a week
- ✓ Park Run
- ✓ Playing football
- ✓ Yoga
- ✓ Exercise
- ✓ Sleep well
- ✓ Positive affirmations daily
- ✓ Celebrating what you love about the job
- ✓ Deliberate strategies to try and keep a sense of perspective.
- ✓ Scream pillow!

Support for the role

- ✓ EPHA headteacher briefings
- ✓ Facilitator for the partnership (accepted that this is not financially viable for many schools)
- ✓ Dedicated Mental Health Lead employed across the MAT for staff
- ✓ Supportive Chair of Governors/CEO
- ✓ Making governors aware of wellbeing needs of headteacher
- ✓ EAP (Employee Assistance Programme) – 24 hours staff support service
<https://www.hrdept.co.uk/services/employee-assistance-programme/>
- ✓ Welbee survey
- ✓ Phone a friend – formal and informal
- ✓ Diocese “Sabbath Day” for church school heads (maybe a version of this could be run for non-school heads?)

Tangible rewards

- ✓ Perk Box – commercial package
- ✓ Chocolate and wine (came up a lot, as did swearing!)
- ✓ Stash of healthy snacks in your top drawer
- ✓ Bringing pet into school
- ✓ Taking time for yourself – sketching, riding
- ✓ Animals/hobbies/music playing
- ✓ Rescue remedy
- ✓ Family events – e.g. attending own kids' sports day

7. FUTURE DATES

SOUTH headteacher meetings 2023/24

Thursday 16 November 2023

Thursday 29 February 2024

Thursday 13 June 2024

Deputy Headteachers' Annual Conference 2023

Friday 13 October 2023 Colchester Football Stadium

Headteachers' Annual Conference 2024

Friday 22 March 2024 Chelmsford City Race Course